CAMPUS PLAN, WILLIAMS COLLEGE

Location: Williamstown, MA
Client: Williams College
Size: 450 acres, 1945 undergraduate, 59 graduate students
Completion: 2001

Williams College is a private, co-educational school established in 1793 and nestled within the Berkshires, Taconic Range, and Green Mountains in northwestern Massachusetts. We completed a campus plan for the College to help guide building, design, and policy decisions for new academic initiatives through the next decade.

We began the study by investigating the College’s historical growth and existing conditions in order to discern underlying patterns and systems useful for guiding future decisions. Key concerns focusing the study included defining the character and ethos of the campus and its landscapes; improving campus circulation and parking; assisting with an extensive array of department relocations; and advising on the impact of three new building projects proposed for construction in the near future. These projects included renovations and additions to Baxter Hall the student center, renovations and additions to the Stetson Hall / Sawyer Library complex, and design of a new performing arts center. Our planning considered, in tandem, the changes to campus activity patterns that would be effected through these projects.

Working closely with the Williams’ Campus Planning Committee, VSBA presented to the College’s Board of Trustees a summary document of its findings. After highlighting the College’s missions, goals, opportunities, problems, issues, and options, this report suggested alternative strategies and design solutions, and recommended courses of action.